

Notes on the History of Pottawattamie County No. 4 [i. e. 5]

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cial directions, if I should not survive, that my body should not be buried near the grave of this unfortunate man.

At this writing, over a quarter of a century has passed since the occurrence of that night; but still those fancied scenes are vividly impressed upon my mind, and no incident in my whole life has made such a lasting impression on my feelings as those of that night.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY.

BY D. C. BLOOMER.

No. 4.

[Continued from page 142.]

IN January, 1857, an act was passed by the general assembly, amending the charter of the city of Council Bluffs, which greatly enlarged the boundaries of the corporation, and the powers of the city council. The limits of the city were made to embrace a territory about four miles square, and extending westward to the Missouri river. A recorders' court was established, with exclusive jurisdiction over all offences arising under the city ordinances, and with the same jurisdiction in all other cases as justices of the peace, within the corporate limits. The city was divided into five wards, in each of which two aldermen are elected for two years—their terms of office expiring in alternate years.

At the first election held under the new charter, on the 9th day of March, 1857, the whole number of votes cast was three hundred and eighty-nine, and the following officers were chosen:—

Mayor—J. S. Hooton.

Recorder—Frank Street.

Treasurer—S. H. Craig.

Assessor—S. N. Porterfield.

City Marshal—H. J. Barnes.

Aldermen—First Ward, John Graves, C. Eubank; Second Ward, Henry Allen, J. P. Williams; Third Ward, C. Gove, T. P. Treynor; Fourth Ward, J. T. Baldwin, D. S. Nye; Fifth Ward, L. W. Babbitt, and D. W. Carpenter.

The city council appointed George Snyder city attorney, who resigned during the year; when Caleb Baldwin was appointed in his place.

A new code of ordinances was passed during the early half of the year, defining the duties of city officers, providing for the punishment of offences against the peace and good order of the inhabitants, and establishing the grade of the principal streets. The salary of the mayor was fixed at \$300; of the recorder, \$500 and fees, and chief engineer at \$600 per year. Provision was made for licensing billiard tables and ten-pin alleys, on the payment of the sum of twenty-five dollars. Commendable progress was made during the year, in grading and improving the streets and bridges. The wide street known as Broadway, extending from the eastern part of the city, westward to the Missouri river, was this year, for the distance of nearly half a mile, furnished with an excellent side-walk through its principal business sections. This was the first side-walk erected in the city. Much attention began to be given this year to the planting of forest and other trees along the streets, and in the adjacent lots. Those set out in this and subsequent years have grown rapidly, and now embower large portions of the city during the summer season, in their beautiful foliage.

Early in the season, the City Mills, a large, brick structure, were completed and put in operation, furnishing to the farmers of the county a market for their wheat, and supplying the market with an excellent quality of flour. They are situated near the business centre of the city, and under the energetic management of Messrs. J. T. Baldwin and G. M. Dodge, have been kept actively at work for upwards of fifteen years. On the 27th of June quite a sensation was awakened in the city, by the arrival of a large train of

Mormons on their way to Salt Lake City. In the train were thirty wagons, each drawn by four oxen, and the whole party made up a caravan numbering several hundred people—besides “much cattle.”

The township of Crescent was established on the 2d of March, 1857, and the first election held on the 19th of June following, at which one hundred and nine votes were polled. This township was originally settled by the Mormons, soon after they arrived in the county. Here, in 1848, just south of the broad bottom land skirting the valley of Pigeon Creek, in township 76, range 44, they erected a large tabernacle of logs, with two large wings, capable of accommodating five hundred or six hundred people. A mill was also erected near this point by——, and a number of farms opened. When the Mormons left—in 1852–3—they were succeeded by a number of families from Indiana, prominent among whom was William A. Reel, who settled here with his sons in 1852, and erected a very large frame dwelling in a very beautiful locality, in the northern part of the township. He also built a saw-mill, and laid out a town site, to which he gave the name of Americus. Among the other Gentile settlers of the township were Edmund Latham, Joseph Boulden, David Dunkle, and Elkanah Hall. After the location of the line of the Mississippi & Missouri railroad, and the alleged discovery of rock in the bed of the Missouri river at Florence, in Nebraska, which point is just east of Crescent township, a good deal of attention was at once excited toward the latter point, and it was thought by many that the line of the road, instead of following the valley of Muskets, would be deflected westwardly in the northern part of the county, run down the valley of Pigeon creek, and cross the river at Florence. No sooner was the idea started, than a real furore of speculation seized a number of people, and a town site called Crescent City was laid out on sections 24 and 25, in township 76, range 43, on which a considerable village speedily sprang up. Joseph E.

Johnson, the wide-awake editor of the *Bugle*, whose farm was situated a mile or two south of the new city, entered into the scheme with great zeal, and was one of its leading proprietors and principal promoters. Here he issued early in 1856, the first number of the Crescent City *Oracle*, a seven-column weekly newspaper, which he continued to publish for upwards of two years at the same place. Crescent City grew rapidly during the years 1856 and 1857. A large number of frame buildings were erected—some of them were handsome structures. Stores and shops were opened, and a hotel established. A steam saw- and grist-mill was erected, and a school house built and a school opened. A post office was established early in 1857, and Lewis J. Goddard appointed post master. Johnson & Blake, Reel & Dutrow, Samuel Eggleston, William Menry, and Allison & Nutting were the principal business men of the place. But the financial crash of 1857, with the certainty that the Mississippi & Missouri railroad would adhere to its original line to Council Bluffs, was rapidly fatal to the growth and life of Crescent City. Toward the end of 1858 it began rapidly to decline. Johnson removed his printing office to Council Bluffs, and closed his store; others soon followed his example, and by the end of the year 1860, the village was very nearly deserted. A post office has however been maintained, and a population of a hundred or so still cluster around the point where once speculation and business were alike active. A large number of the best buildings have been removed—either to Council Bluffs or to farms in the immediate vicinity. Meantime the township of Crescent, which is twelve miles in length from east to west, and is now crossed from north to south by the Chicago & Northwestern railroad, has steadily grown to form one of the finest farming portions of the county. It is well watered and very well supplied with timber. Its population in 1860 was five hundred and thirty-five, and in 1870 it had increased to one thousand one hundred and seventeen. It has always been largely democratic in politics.

The first number of the Council Bluffs *Nonpareil*, a weekly newspaper of nine columns, appeared early in May, 1857, proprietors, Maynard and Long; editor, William W. Maynard. It was a handsomely printed and ably edited sheet, and its publication, under various editors and publishers, has been continued to the present time. The *Chromotype* continued to be issued during a part of the year; but, becoming the property of Mr. A. P. Bently, it was converted into a democratic organ, and called the *Democratic Clarion*. Finally, in 1868, the material on which it was printed was removed from the county, and the *Nonpareil* and *Bugle* continued for several years the only papers published in Council Bluffs, with the exception of a few months in 1859, during which a paper called the Council Bluffs *Press* was issued by J. E. Johnson. The *Bugle* was printed daily for about six months during the summer of 1857, but the experiment not proving a profitable one, its daily issue was suspended for several years, and until the war was under way.

On the 19th of June, 1857, a special election was held in the county, at which the question of subscribing three hundred thousand dollars to the stock of the Mississippi & Missouri railroad, was submitted to the electors, to be paid for in bonds of the county, having twenty years to run, and drawing interest payable semi-annually, at the rate of ten per cent per annum — bonds not to be issued unless the then established route and terminus of the road should be retained, nor until work on said road was actually commenced within the limits of the county. Public attention was deeply excited on the subject — especially in the city of Council Bluffs, in which eight hundred and forty-seven votes were polled, all in the affirmative except fourteen; outside of city two hundred and twenty-seven votes in all were cast, of which two hundred and five were in the negative, and twenty-two in the affirmative — leaving a clear majority in the county in favor of subscribing the stock and issuing the bonds, of six hundred and thirty-six. As the bonds were not to be issued until work had actually com-

menced in the county, the question was allowed to rest until the fall of 1858, when an earnest and finally successful effort was made to secure their issuance. For that purpose the promise was made that work should actually be commenced within the limits of the county, and in fact, a few thousand dollars were expended in the Musketo valley in the following spring, in grading about half a mile of the road bed. The county judge, at the time, however, held back from signing the bonds, and it was not until several excited public meetings had been held, and a strong pressure had been brought upon him, that he finally consented to affix his signature. The bonds, to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars, bearing date the 29th day of January, 1859, were placed in the hands of certain parties in Council Bluffs, but finally they went into the possession of the railroad officials. These disposed of them to the amount of thirty-five thousand dollars and for the interest on the bonds thus sold, heavy judgments have been obtained against the county within the last two years, which the taxpayers are now paying off. The remaining bonds, to the amount of sixty-five thousand dollars, were never placed in the market; but were finally surrendered up to the county in exchange for the stock issued to it by the old Mississippi & Missouri railroad company. Fortunately, these were the only bonds ever issued to any railroad company by Pottawattamie county.

Early in 1857, a subscription was circulated, which amounted in the aggregate, to about ten thousand dollars, and a lot purchased preparatory to the erection of a Presbyterian church in Council Bluffs. This church was first organized in the fall of 1856, under the auspices of the Reverend Mr. Bell, a well known Presbyterian missionary in the west. The first elders of the church were James B. Rue and Thomas Officer. The legal organization dates from February, 1857, when articles of corporation were filed, containing the names of John T. Baldwin, Thomas Officer, James A. Johnson, C. W. Boyers, and W. H. M.

Pusey, as trustees. So far as I have been able to find, Reverend John Hancock, formerly of the state of Kentucky, was the first Presbyterian clergyman who officiated in Council Bluffs. He came here in 1856, an entire stranger. After remaining a few days, he passed over to Bellevue, Nebraska, where he met with the Reverend William Hamilton, the missionary to the Omaha Indians at that place. Returning, he made the acquaintance of Messrs. Officer, Boyers, Rue, and others, and soon after called together the scattered members of the church in the city, and commenced his labors among them. He belonged to the old-school branch of the church, and his pastoral relations continued until the fall of 1860. The erection of a brick church which had been commenced in 1857, was suspended after the walls in the basement had been completed, and was not resumed until 1865; the congregation in the meantime occupying rented rooms, and finally a temporary frame building erected for the purpose, on Pearl street. In the early days of the county, the holding of fairs and festivals was a frequent and successful way of raising money. One of these fairs held on Christmas day and evening, in 1856, by this church, proved remarkably successful, and realized over one thousand dollars to its treasury.

On the first day of August, 1857, the corner-stone of St. Paul's Episcopal church, was laid in Council Bluffs by the Right Reverend Henry W. Lee, the Episcopal Bishop of Iowa. The Reverend George W. Watson was present, and assisted in the services. The people assembled in the Congregational church, and marched in procession to the lot, where the stone was prepared. A brief history of the parish, with the newspapers of the city, a few coins, and some other articles were deposited in the box prepared for the purpose, and over this a large stone was deposited; after which an appropriate address was delivered by the bishop. St. Paul's parish had been organized on the 17th of April, 1856, through the efforts of Reverend E. W. Peet, then of Des Moines, who was the first Episcopal clergyman who

visited Pottawattamie county, or held service within its limits. The first vestrymen of the church were J. B. Beers, Horace Everett, W. C. James, J. P. Casady, D. C. Bloomer, A. Cochran, T. P. Treynor, Samuel Perin, and G. W. Dodge. In the fall the parish was visited for the first time by Bishop Lee, accompanied by the venerable Bishop Kemper, the missionary bishop of the northwest. In February, 1857, the Reverend George W. Watson arrived and took charge of the parish, as missionary. He also had charge of a parish in Omaha, and divided his services equally between them. It was through his influence, and the active zeal of two or three members of the parish, that a lot was purchased, and preparations made for the erection of a church. Nothing further was done toward effecting the object, beyond laying the corner-stone which still stands—just as it was left on the beautiful summer morning in 1857, in which it was laid. A small frame edifice was however erected on the church lot in 1860, which is still used as a place of worship by the congregation. The Reverend G. W. Watson remained in charge of the parish until the spring of 1860.

At the election held in the year 1857, for county officers, the republicans—who were in a decided minority in the county—made no nominations, but the candidates supported by them were mostly elected. D. S. Nye was chosen county judge; W. D. Turner, treasurer and recorder; William Baker, sheriff, and Samuel Perin, county surveyor. The total vote for sheriff, stood as follows: William Baker, two hundred and twenty-three; William L. Biggs, two hundred and twelve; D. B. Clark, one hundred and sixty-six; Egbert Ellsworth, eighty-eight.

At the October election, two hundred and sixty-four votes were given for the new constitution, and four hundred and eighty-one against it. For striking the word "white" out of the suffrage section, seven affirmative votes were cast, and two hundred and fifty-seven in the negative. The *Nonpareil*, the republican organ in the county at this time,

strongly opposed negro suffrage. For governor, Benjamin M. Samuels received four hundred and sixty-three votes, and R. P. Lowe, two hundred and five. For senator, W. H. M. Pusey had four hundred and twenty-six votes; Frank Stut, two hundred and forty-five. For representative, S. H. Casady received four hundred and sixty-two, and J. W. Denison two hundred and four votes. Pusey and Casady were elected. This year the votes in the county were divided among the different townships as follows: Kane, five hundred and four; Centre, sixteen; Crescent, eighty-nine; Knox, fifteen; Rockford, thirty-eight; Walnut, nine; Macedonia, fifteen. During the canvass Messrs. Samuels and Lowe visited the county and held a joint discussion at Council Bluffs.

County Judge D. S. Nye entered upon his office with the promise of making a reform and improvement in the manner of conducting county affairs and county finances; the latter especially, it was charged, had been badly managed by his predecessor, and large amounts of swamp land money loaned upon insufficient securities. But the promises held out, of better things under the new administration, were hardly fulfilled. During the early part of 1859, a tract of land for a poor-farm was purchased, at a price, it was believed, far beyond its true value, and, when the order of the county judge, in making the purchase, was found to be illegal, an act was promptly passed by the general assembly—then in session—confirming his action. Public sentiment in the county at the time was greatly outraged by the proceeding, and some of his sureties having withdrawn from his official bond, Nye, on the first of May, 1858, resigned his office, and its duties thereafter devolved upon J. H. Sherman, the county prosecuting attorney. The latter soon after made an order directing the drainage commissioner to drain the swamp and overflowed lands of the county, and large amounts of money were expended on the work during this and the following year.

The tide of speculation which marked the close of the year 1856, continued in full force in Council Bluffs during the spring and summer of 1857. Sales of lots and lands in and adjoining the town site were frequent, and steadily advancing in price. Lots on the business streets reached to one hundred, and one hundred and fifty dollars per foot, and it seemed as though no one could make a purchase that was too high for some one else to take it off his hands at an increased price. The assessed value of real and personal property within the limits of the town, as returned by the township assessor, amounted on the first day of July, to the large sum of two million two hundred and seventy-six thousand six hundred dollars. As a large proportion of this property consisted of unoccupied town lots and lands, it was, of course, based upon speculative values. Knowing ones looked upon this state of things as altogether unusual, and predicted that a crash must soon come—as indeed it did—but no one cared for these prophets of disaster at that time; money was plenty; lots sold rapidly, and a continued stream of new-comers kept up the delusion, and steadily enhanced the rate at which sales of real estate were made. At the same time a wonderful degree of activity in all branches of business was apparent. The river was in fine condition, and steamers arrived at the landing with goods from below, almost daily. Lumber yards were opened, and building material—always enormously high—was abundant and sold readily. Trade was active, and the merchants were all doing a good business. The emigration across the plains was large, and the demand for corn and country produce was fully equal to the supply, and at high prices. A large number of substantial dwellings were commenced early in the season, and finished before cold weather. Mr. W. C. James purchased the property at the corner of Main and Broadway streets, and commenced, in connection with Milton Rogers and W. B. Lewis, the erection of a new three-story building—since known as the James block. Mr. J. M. Palmer, besides

finishing off the block which bears his name, also began the work on a new two-story building afterwards known as Concert Hall, one of the handsomest ever erected in the city, but which was, after a few years, destroyed by fire. Messrs. John A. Andrews, F. A. Tuttle, and H. C. Nutt made a large purchase of real estate, in the then southern part of the city, and commenced work on a large hotel located about half a mile from the business part of the town. Although the proprietors expended from twenty thousand to twenty-five thousand dollars upon it, the structure was never finished, and was finally torn down and the materials used in the erection of other buildings, some years afterwards, and the spot where it stood is now (1872) occupied by the Congregational church.

The banking firms in business in the city this summer (1857), were the following: Officer & Pusey; Green, Weare, & Benton; Baldwin & Dodge; S. H. Riddel & Co.; and J. M. Palmer & Co. Colonel Thomas H. Benton, the resident member of the second firm, erected a fine brick dwelling in one of the glens with which the city abounds; and Messrs. Officer and Pusey each built substantial dwelling houses on the south side of the public square. Mr. Benton also erected a fine banking house on Broadway, into which he moved his office about the first of September. All these bankers, except the firstnamed firm, dealt more or less extensively in Nebraska currency, of which large quantities were afloat in the community. Colonel Benton was president of the American Exchange Bank of Omaha; and also of a similar institution in Bellevue. The failure of these institutions early in the autumn, led to the closing of his own banking house at Council Bluffs. This event occurred on the 25th day of September, and inflicted quite heavy losses upon a number of persons whose money had been deposited with him. Colonel Benton made earnest and persistent efforts to meet his obligations; but many of his banking loans turned out to be nearly or quite worthless, and, after surrendering all these

up to meet his liabilities, together with his homestead, considerable amounts still remained unpaid. His failure was the beginning of financial distress in the whole Missouri slope.

Thenceforward money became less and less abundant. The Nebraska banks one after another went down, and their bills became worthless; and the fever of speculation was, for a long time to come, most decidedly checked. Town lots gradually depreciated in value, and the business of real estate dealers became distressingly dull. Prices fell lower and lower, and in the city of Council Bluffs lots that in 1856-7 sold readily for three thousand or four thousand dollars, could hardly, at the end of four years from that date, be sold for one-fourth of these sums. For reasons, however, which I shall presently notice, the residents of this city never realized the full extent of the financial disaster of 1857, as keenly as some other sections of the country.

Boomer township was organized on the 8th of January, 1858. It is situated on the northern line of the county; is twelve miles long from east to west, and six miles wide from north to south, being town 77, ranges 42 and 43. It is traversed diagonally from the north-east by Pigeon and Honey creeks; and along these considerable settlements were made by the Mormons, as early as 1847-8. The oldest residents of this class were Robert Kent, Samuel Bate-man, Joseph Wild, John Macklin, Joseph Beardsley, and William McKeon. They all remained in the county after the general emigration to Salt Lake in 1852, and organized a branch of the Mormon church, opposed to the pretensions of Brigham Young, and recognizing Joseph Smith as their spiritual leader. The church still exists, and has a considerable number of members in the county, and holds its meetings regularly in the different school houses of the township. Joseph Hall, who came into the township in 1852; Z. W. Remington, and William Goodman, in 1854; and Isaac M. Sigler, in 1857, were the first Gentile settlers.

The first township officers elected in 1858, were : —

✓Samuel Bateman—*Justice of the Peace.*

✓Isaac M. Sigler—*Town Clerk.*

✓Henry Givens, Allen Jones, and Joseph Hall—*Trustees.*

James Kent was the first representative of the township on the board of supervisors, serving two years. He was succeeded by Isaac M. Sigler, who served six years. The first school in the township was opened in 1859, in an underground room in Sigler's yard. The township settled up slowly. From the first it was strongly democratic in politics — there being for several years only one republican vote in the township.

The land office at Council Bluffs was reöpened for the sale and entry of government land, on the 23d of February, 1858, by James Pollard, register, and A. H. Palmer, receiver. There was a great crowd of land-buyers in attendance for several months, and the hotels of the city were crowded. Up to the 14th of August, seven hundred and nine thousand eight hundred and fifty-nine acres had been located with land warrants, and twenty thousand and nine acres entered and paid for with cash. Under the operation of this system nearly all the public lands in southwestern Iowa were, in the course of a few years, disposed of, or granted to the railroads, so that when the homestead law of 1862 was passed, only a very small amount was left for settlement under its benign provisions. In June of that year, James Pollard resigned the office of register, and Lewis S. Hill, who had been a most capable and efficient clerk for several years, was appointed in his place.

The leading land agency firms engaged in business this year were Henn, William, Hooton & Co.; Casady & Test; Baldwin & Dodge; Sam Perin; Loudon Mullin; A. Cochran; Officer & Pusey; and Horace Everett.

At the annual city election in March, 1858, the following city officers were elected : —

Mayor—J. S. Hooton.

Recorder—Frank Street.

Treasurer—C. W. Boyer.

City Marshal—C. W. Bryan.

Aldermen—First Ward, J. B. Lewis and B. Hagg; Second Ward, J. P. Casady; Third Ward, Milton Rogers; Fourth Ward, A. Cochran; Fifth Ward, A. Shoemaker.

The following city officers were appointed :—

City Attorney—C. E. Stone.

City Engineer—Samuel Perin.

City Supervisor—Elias Thornton.

The principal work accomplished during this year by the city council, was the digging of a new channel for Indian creek, a small stream that meandered through the valley in which a portion of the town is built. Like all western streams, its bed was very crooked and quite deep, but, in seasons of high water, it overflowed its banks; often doing much damage to adjoining property. The project of cutting a new channel—by which it was made to run nearly due west, out into the Missouri bottom—had been a favorite one for some time. This year it was finally accomplished, mainly through the exertions and energy of Colonel A. Cochran, a member of the city council. To effect this object, the mill property of Madison Dagger was purchased by the city, and paid for in city bonds, which have since been redeemed; and the locality where the mill and mill race were situated is now nearly all occupied by handsome dwellings. In several law suits which have been brought against the city in subsequent years, for damages alleged to have been caused by the straightening of the creek, the legality and good policy of the work have been fully vindicated. The new channel, beside furnishing a fair supply of water at all seasons of the year, furnishes excellent drainage for the city; and, when the work of properly protecting its banks is completed, its beneficial influence upon the health and convenience of the inhabitants will be still more fully acknowledged.

On the 19th of May, 1858, a convention was held in Council Bluffs, for the purpose of promoting the construction of

a railroad from that city to Saint Joseph. Four counties in Iowa, two counties in Nebraska, and three counties in Missouri were represented by delegates. The proposed railroad was quite fully and favorably considered, and an organization for its construction effected. The first officers of the new company were:—

✓ S. F. Nuckolls—*President*.

✓ Horace Everett—*Vice President*.

✓ S. S. Curtis—*Secretary*.

✓ L. Nuckolls—*Treasurer*.

✓ H. C. Nutt was appointed chief engineer, and he immediately proceeded to make a survey of the portion of the road extending from Council Bluffs to the state line. His first and preliminary report was submitted to the stockholders at a meeting held on the 12th of July following, at which time Enos Lowe, S. F. Nuckolls, B. F. Rector, J. W. Coolidge, L. Nuckolls, L. W. Babbitt, J. S. Jackson, J. D. Test, and A. Cochran, were elected directors for the ensuing year. Mr. Nutt's report was highly favorable to the construction of the road. Very little grading would be required for the road-bed, and only one or two bridges of any importance, on the entire route to the state line.

At the April election in 1858, held in the county, James B. Rue was elected county superintendent of schools, by three hundred and fifty-six votes against two hundred and forty-one for Samuel Eggleston, and nineteen for Thomas Officer. On the 28th of June, the vote for a state bank and for a general banking law was largely in the affirmative. At the August election, J. H. Sherman was elected county judge; C. P. Kellogg, clerk of the district court; and C. P. Smith, coroner. The fourth election this year was held in October, but was not conducted with a great deal of spirit. S. R. Curtis and Henry H. Trimble the opposing candidates for congress, each visited the county and delivered addresses, but the meetings were not largely attended. The result was as follows:—

Trimble.....	451
Curtis.....	242

And the majority for the other democratic candidate was about two hundred. At the same time E. H. Sears was elected district judge, and R. B. Parrott prosecuting attorney of the third judicial district, to which Pottawattamie county belonged. The former was the republican and the latter the democratic candidate; the opposing candidates were J. M. Dews and Samuel Forrey.

Silver Creek township was organized on the 7th of September, 1858. Its name is taken from a beautiful stream of water that runs across its eastern part, and along which the first settlements were made as early as 1848. The old Mormon trail, and subsequent stage road, crossed the creek in section 31, town 74—41, and here a frame dwelling and barn were erected by a man named Mace, in 1850, which were long used as a stage station. The western part of Silver Creek township is crossed by Keg creek, and near the point where this is crossed by the stage road, a settlement was early made by a man named Shaw, who sold out to William Campbell, in 1852. About the same time James M. Putney and Thomas Moffatt settled near the same place. Thomas Moffatt, in December, 1853, made the first entry of land in the township. The next entries were made early in 1854, by Lyman Campbell and Pleasant Taylor. The next settlers in the township were Edward Ward, John Bratten, and J. D. Craven. The township settled up slowly, and, at the time of its organization, had only about a dozen votes. It has at present two school houses within its limits. The population in 1870, by the United States census, was two hundred and thirty-one.

The first exhibition of the Pottawattamie county agricultural society was held at Council Bluffs on the 13th and 14th of October, 1858. The number of entries was quite large, and the display of stock and agricultural productions very encouraging. Caleb Baldwin was president of the society; W. H. Kinman, secretary; and among the exhibit-

ors at the fair, and those most active in promoting its objects, were L. W. Babbitt, D. B. Clark, William Garner, H. A. Terry, J. E. Johnson, M. Turley, and others. Col. Babbitt's famous horse, Cherokee, carried off the first and highest premium of eight dollars. The ladies' tournament on the second day, excited a great deal of interest, and two fine saddles were awarded to the best riders. The ladies who competed for these prizes were, Mrs. Gough, Miss Josephine Biggs, Mrs. Wright, Miss Amy White, Mrs. Milton, Mrs. Robinson, and Miss Delia Jackson. As usual with all public gatherings in those days, a social dance followed in the evening following the second day of the fair, which was largely attended by the citizens, both male and female.

On the morning of the 4th day of December, 1858, Mr. A. D. Long, one of the publishers of the Council Bluffs *Nonpareil*, was found, frozen to death, in a small creek near the centre of the city, into which he had fallen from an open bridge while on his way to his residence the evening previous. The night had been intensely cold, and it was supposed that he had been so benumbed by the fall that he was unable to extricate himself from the icy channel. This sad event threw a deep gloom over the community. Mr. Long was a warmhearted, steadfast friend, a kind husband and father, and possessed those genial and social traits that endeared his memory to a large circle of friends.

I have already remarked that the people of Council Bluffs were never called upon to realize the full severity of the hard times that followed the financial crash of 1857, as keenly as some other sections of the country. This was principally owing to the tide of emigration that was constantly sweeping across the state of Iowa for the western territories and California. The Missouri river towns, and especially the county seat of Pottawattamie county, were the great outfitting points for a large proportion of these emigrants; hence, trade was active; merchandise sold freely for cash, and the farmer found a good market for his corn

and wheat, and at fair prices. The discovery of gold in Cherry creek, in what is now the territory of Colorado, greatly augmented and increased this traffic. Captain J. H. Smith, a resident of Council Bluffs, is said to have been the first person who found the sparkling metal in the bed of the river in that now famous locality. The first announcement of this discovery was made in the Council Bluffs *Nonpareil*, on the 11th of September, 1858, and the article had the following heading, in startling capitals:—

“PIKE’S PEAK GOLD DIGGINGS. EUREKA! EUREKA!! GOLD MINES WITHIN 500 MILES. THE BEST ROUTE THITHER. THE YELLOW FEVER SPREADING RAPIDLY. THE ONLY ANTIDOTE—PICK AND SHOVEL.”

And from that time for the next year or two, a large portion of the columns of all the papers published in the country were filled with articles on the new gold regions, and the best route to them. Council Bluffs, Nebraska City, and Saint Joseph were the rival outfitting towns, and the public press of each labored to convince the country that the best and shortest, and most direct road to the diggings lay through its limits. An elaborate map appears in the papers of Council Bluffs, in January, 1859, of the road from Council Bluffs to the Cherry Creek gold mines, of which thousands of copies were published and scattered over the country. A number of residents of Pottawattamie county left for the new gold fields, in the fall of 1858, among whom was Samuel S. Curtis, whose letters appeared regularly in the *Nonpareil*. Reports continued uniformly favorable for several months, and a steady stream of gold-seekers—in spite of the inclemency of the weather—pushed across the plains. Many of these were but poorly provided for the hardships and privations of the way; hundreds, it was asserted, perished from cold and starvation. As the spring of 1859 advanced, the reports were less favorable, and not a few of the newspapers at the east pronounced the whole thing a humbug. In April and May a regular stampede

among the emigrants commenced and hundreds of them recrossed the Missouri on their return. Some of these people were highly indignant at the people and newspapers on the Missouri, who, it was charged, misled them into setting out on their bootless search for gold, and threats of vengeance were sometimes heard. This led timorous people to fear for the safety of their property.

Early in the spring of 1859, William H. Kinsman, a young man of indomitable perseverance, who for several months had been writing for the *Nonpareil*, walked the entire distance from Council Bluffs to Cherry creek. As he marched westward he sent back encouraging letters, which were published in the county papers. He reached the mining region early in June, and his first letter, giving the result of his explorations and observations in the gold region, reached Council Bluffs in mid-summer. It was highly favorable, and produced a great excitement. The *Nonpareil* printing office was illuminated; a band of music paraded the streets, and a crowd gathered in front of Palmer's block where addresses were delivered by Dr. Farmer and others. The announcement of the event in the *Nonpareil* was characteristic, and spread out in flaming capitals, read as follows: —

"LET THE SHANGHAI CROW." (A grotesque picture of a rooster here followed.)

"LET THE HAWKEYE GROAN. LETTER FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT, W. H. KINSMAN, ESQ. THE GOLD OF PIKE'S PEAK NO LONGER A MYTH. OUR FONDEST HOPES REALIZED. GRAND ILLUMINATION. REJOICING OF THE PEOPLE. TRUTH VINDICATED. JUSTICE TRIUMPHANT."

The expression, "Let the Hawkeye groan," referred to the course of the Burlington *Hawkeye*, which had, on several occasions, pronounced the whole story about the discovery of gold on Cherry creek a wicked deception and fraud. At the same time, the letters of Horace Greeley, A. D. Richardson, and Henry Vibbard were published, giving also a

highly favorable report of the prospects of the mines in the Pike's Peak regions.

This seemed to settle the question, and indeed, from this time no one was hardy enough to deny the existence of gold in the new mining region. The emigration went steadily forward, and the wagons of the emigrants lined the roads and filled the valleys, during the summer season, of Iowa and Nebraska, until the construction of the Union Pacific railroad furnished a quicker, cheaper, and more convenient mode of travel to the mountains, and the rich mines with which they abound.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

REMINISCENCES OF EARLY SETTLERS.

BY R. B. GROFF, MARENGO, IOWA.

HENRY SPRAGUE came to this city from his advanced trading-post, some thirty-five miles above this place, on the Iowa river just above what is now called Raven Creek. He had selected this as a point for trading with the Indians. The company consisted of his father, brother, wife, and himself. After having constructed his temporary log shanty, he returned to his former home at Brush Run (now Homestead), for some implement that had been forgotten. A trip there and back (eighty miles) would now be considered quite an undertaking. (When he came back here it was late in the fall of 1848.) It was snowing very fast—large, plushy flakes fell so fast that he feared his progress would be impeded. He tried to buy a pair of snow-shoes from an old Indian here; but, failing in this, he bought some coffee, sugar, and tea at the only store we then had in this place, and started homeward.

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